

It is claimed:

1. A home-based client-side media computer for use within a home that has a broadband connection to an Internet network, comprising:

5 a first connection port to allow a speech-based conversation to occur over
the home-based broadband connection to the Internet network;

a second connection port to allow a speech-based conversation to occur over a public switched telephone network (PSTN); and

a plurality of speech engines that recognize speech and synthesize speech

10 to allow the speech-based conversations to occur over the first connection port and the
second connection port.

2. The home-based computer of claim 1 wherein a user connects to the home-based computer via the broadband connection in order to provide at least one home appliance with a signal.

15 voice command, said home-based computer further comprising:

an appliance control software module that controls at least one home appliance based upon the user's voice command.

3. The home-based computer of claim 2 wherein the user uses a wireless communication
20 device to connect to the home-based computer in order to provide the home appliance
voice command.

4. The home-based computer of claim 3 wherein a user connects to the home-based computer over the second connection port in order to provide at least one home appliance voice command, said home-based computer further comprising:

an appliance control software module that controls at least one home
5 appliance based upon the user's voice command received over the second connection
port.

5. The home-based computer of claim 4 wherein the user uses a plain telephone connected to the PSTN in order to provide the home appliance voice command over the second connection port.

6. The home-based computer of claim 1 wherein a user connects to the home-based computer via the broadband connection in order to provide at least one personal software application voice command, said home-based computer further comprising:

15 a personal software application retrieval module that retrieves personal
information from a software application based upon the personal software application
voice command of the user.

7. The home-based computer of claim 6 wherein the user uses a wireless communication device to connect to the home-based computer in order to provide the personal software application voice command.

8. The home-based computer of claim 7 wherein the software application is software selected from the group consisting of personal information management software, financial software, electronic mail software, and combinations thereof.

5 9. The home-based computer of claim 7 wherein a user connects to the home-based computer over the second connection port in order to provide at least one personal software application voice command, wherein the personal software application retrieval module controls at least one home appliance based upon the user's voice command received over the second connection port.

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10. The home-based computer of claim 9 wherein the user uses a plain telephone connected to the PSTN in order to provide the home appliance voice command over the second connection port.

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11. The home-based computer of claim 10 wherein the software application is software selected from the group consisting of personal information management software, financial software, electronic mail software, and combinations thereof.

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12. The home-based computer of claim 1 wherein the computer operates within a residential home of a user.

13. The home-based computer of claim 1 wherein the computer operates within SOHO environment.

14. The home-based computer of claim 1 wherein the computer operates within a non-Internet Service Provider environment.

5 15. The home-based computer of claim 1 wherein the first connection port provides for voice data over a VoIP channel.

16. The home-based computer of claim 1 wherein the first connection port provides for voice data over a VoN channel.

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17. The home-based computer of claim 1 further comprising:
a voice markup language management module connected to the Internet network in order to retrieve a voice markup language program to interact by a speech-based conversation with the user over the first and second connections.

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18. The home-based computer of claim 17 wherein the voice markup language management module communicates a voice application request to a voice application web site over the Internet, wherein the voice application web site provides a voice markup language program to the voice markup language management module.

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19. The home-based computer of claim 18 wherein the provided voice markup language program interacts by a speech-based conversation with the user.

20. The home-based computer of claim 19 wherein the web site includes a database that stores the voice application data in accordance with a predetermined voice application taxonomy, wherein the web site retrieves voice application data based upon the voice application request from the voice markup language management module, wherein the 5 retrieved voice application data is used to provide the voice markup language program to the voice markup language management module.

21. The home-based computer of claim 20 wherein the voice application request is based at least in part upon the voice application taxonomy.

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22. The home-based computer of claim 21 wherein the voice application taxonomy includes classifications selected from the group consisting of required speech engine resources, required telephony resources, required telephony markup language, required application server environment, and combinations thereof.

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23. The home-based computer of claim 20 wherein a plurality of audio advertisements is accessible by the web site, wherein at least one of the audio advertisements is retrieved and based upon predetermined selection rules, wherein the retrieved audio advertisement is played to the user.

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24. The home-based computer of claim 23 wherein the request includes a user profile, wherein at least one of the audio advertisements that substantially matches the user profile is played to the user.

25. The home-based computer of claim 23 wherein the selection rules includes balanced ad usage rules that are used to determine which stored audio advertisement to retrieve.

5 26. The home-based computer of claim 1 further comprising:
 a phone management module that handles calls from a user over the first
 and second connection ports in order to allow a speech-based conversation to occur with
 another user.

27. A home-based computer-implemented method for use within a home that has a connection to an Internet network, comprising the steps of:

communicating with a first communication device located on the Internet network so that a speech-based conversation can occur over the home-based connection
5 to the Internet network;

communicating with a second communication device located on a public switched telephone network (PSTN) so that the speech-based conversation can occur over the public switched telephone network; and

10 recognizing speech and synthesizing speech to allow the speech-based conversation to occur over the Internet network and the public switched telephone network.

28. The home-based method of claim 27 wherein a user connects over the Internet network to the home-based computer via a broadband connection in order to provide at 15 least one home appliance voice command, said home-based method further comprising the step of:

controlling at least one home appliance based upon the user's voice command.

20 29. The home-based method of claim 28 wherein the user uses a wireless communication device to connect to the home-based computer in order to provide the home appliance voice command.

30. The home-based method of claim 27 wherein a user connects to the home-based computer via a broadband Internet network connection in order to provide at least one personal software application voice command, said home-based method further comprising the step of:

5 retrieving personal information from a software application based upon the personal software application voice command of the user.

31. The home-based method of claim 30 wherein the user uses a wireless communication device to connect to the home-based computer in order to provide the personal software application voice command.

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32. The home-based method of claim 31 wherein the software application is software selected from the group consisting of personal information management software, financial software, electronic mail software, and combinations thereof.

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33. The home-based method of claim 27 further comprising the step of:

 retrieving a voice markup language program so that the speech-based conversation can occur.

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34. The home-based method of claim 27 further comprising the step of:

 retrieving from a remote database a voice application to manage the speech-based conversation.

41. The home-based method of claim 27 wherein the second communication device is a plain phone.